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Wednesday, March 7, 2012

# THE SINGREWS

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## AIFF 2012 to take place June 22 – 28

The Aruba International Film Festival (AIFF) announced today that its third edition will take place June 22-28, 2012. Initial details surrounding the 2012 Film Festival were unveiled at a press conference by AIFF Founder and executive producer Jonathan Vieira.

"We have listened closely to the valuable feedback we received on the first two festivals and this has helped us learn, prepare and grow for the new edition, which everyone will experience this summer," said Vieira. "We are in great shape to stage a world



From L to R: ATA's Sanju Daryanani, DJ Chuckie and Jonathan Vieira at the press conference yesterday

# Moment of truth on Greek debt deal approaches

GREECE (AFP) -- Banks, insurers and investment funds holding Greek debt must decide by Thursday whether to cancel half of the money they are owed, a key component of an EU/IMF plan to keep Greece from defaulting.

Investors have until 2000 GMT Thursday to join an unprecedented debt swap worth up to 107 billion euros (\$140 billion) known as private sector involvement or PSI, which was agreed in Febru-

ary after months of tough negotiations.

"I'm confident that the PSI deal will be successfully concluded," EU Economic Affairs Commission Olli Rehn said Tuesday during a visit to Paris.

Under the terms of the deal, holders of Greek debt are asked to exchange a total of 206 billion euros in bonds for new debt with a 30-year maturity, EU-backed notes and securities linked to Greece's future output.

The restructuring of Greece's 350-billion-euro debt pile is also based on 130 billion euros in loans from the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

But Greece has warned that 75 percent of eligible investors must take part in the debt swap or the exercise would be called off, just two weeks ahead of a 14.4-billion-euro debt reimbursement that Athens cannot afford.

class film festival, with a number of new and expanded attractions, thanks to the tremendous support from all of our partners, especially the government of Aruba and the worldwide filmmaking community that has discovered and embraced the festival."

Distinguished writer, director and producer Claudio Masenza, revered in the international film community for over 30 years, will continue to oversee programming for AIFF as the festival's Artistic Director. He brings with him years of experience as a member of the selection committees for the world renowned Venice Film Festival and Rome Film Festival.

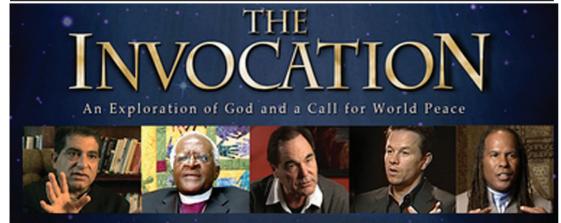
Innovative new events, combined with expanded ex-

isting programs, will offer a wide spectrum of experiences appealing to dedicated film buffs and those who love rubbing elbows with major celebrities. This includes three distinct programs which further the festival's broader mission to encourage, educate and stimulate young Aruban filmmakers.

The selections of the 2012 Caribbean Spotlight Series (CSS) complement the international films in the festival program while showcasing the work of Aruban and Caribbean filmmakers.

Categories in this popular series include "Docpourri", a new non-competitive series with documentary topics relevant to Aruban audiences.

Continue on pg 2



Tonight, The Crystal Theater in the Renaissance Mall will host a free screening of "The Invocation" by French filmmaker Emmanual Itier, narrated by Sharon Stone. Mr. Itier has traveled to Aruba to be present and respond to queries about his production. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. (More info on pg 2)



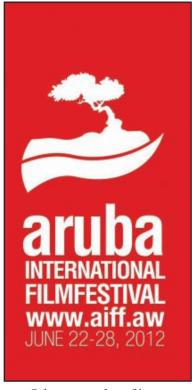


# AIFF 2012 to take place June 22 – 28 Continued from pg 1

The "Aruba Flavor" competition aims to spark local youth to consider filmmaking as a viable career choice. Once again, patrons will be asked to select their favorite from the feature film category to determine the "AIFF CSS Audience Award."

This year, the Festival has the honor of partnering with international music superstar DJ/ Artist/Producer Chuckie. who will be celebrating his birthday weekend by staging a concert with his world touring brand Dirty Dutch on Saturday, June 23. "We consider this a very special addition to the opening weekend of the Film Festival," said Mr. Vieira, "and AIFF is proud to consider Chuckie as an Ambassador to the Festival Weekend Concert series, which he will also headline. This new element to the festival's social events is in line with our plan of bringing the after parties and celebrity-toguest interaction to another

Also new this year is an art exposition themed "Film: Catch the Moment." Visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy the talent and creativity of Aruba's prodigious art community with the option to purchase the displayed paintings or sculptures.



Other examples of innovative programming for the 2012 season include:

- The official AIFF Poster Contest, which each year determines the look of the Festival Magazine will now be open to international entries. The winning designer will receive complimentary travel and accommodation for the festival.
- The AIFF Volunteer Program will be expanded to

include "Angels" -- local student volunteers from "the best of the best" at Aruba's EPI School of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Their work during the festival will earn them school credit while they hone the skills needed to be successful in the tourism industry. They will learn from the excellent corps of volunteers who have been so essential in keeping the AIFF running smoothly over the past two years.

Special emphasis will be placed on educational and training programs. The popular film production course, "96 Hours," is back with an additional advanced program for those who completed the class last year. The new advanced program will offer a more in-depth focus on directing and editing. Expert instructors in screenwriting and acting will be conducting separate classes alongside the production course. Students from each subject will be teamed together to produce their finished projects, which will be screened during a special session of the festival.

The 3rd Aruba International Film Festival aims to further its tradition of attracting prodigious films and stars and providing the most intimate and pleasurable setting for festival goers. Visit the festival website to discover the many opportunities to become actively involved with this exciting event. Regular updates and complete online forms provide the means to purchase tickets in advance as well as to submit your work or sign up as a volunteer. This year, explore not only an expanded Aruba International Film Festival but also a new website at: http://www.arubainternationalfilmfestival.com.

Rosalie Klein

# French filmmaker Emmanuel Itier on island for free screening of his film "The Invocation"



**Emmanual Itier** 

In observance of International Women's Day 2012, Aruba's Minster of Social & Economic Affairs and Culture, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar announced a few weeks ago the Aruba Women's Day Conference, to be conducted on March 8 and 9.

A number of events dedicated to the equalization and empowerment of women will take place, including performances of "The Vagina Monologues" at the Cas di Culture by a visiting troupe of Canadian performers, tomorrow and Friday evening.

Tonight, The Crystal Theater in the Renaissance Mall will host a free screening of "The Invocation" by French

filmmaker Emmanual Itier, narrated by Sharon Stone. Mr. Itier has traveled to Aruba to be present and respond to queries about his production. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m.

The 90-minute documentary is an exploration of the notion of 'God' and World Peace through Religion, Spirituality, History, Science, Politics and Arts. It is comprised of a number of interesting interviews with a diverse cross section of society, ranging from The Dalia Lama and Deepak Chopra, to film personalities Rosario Dawson and Malcolm McDowell.

Rosalie Klein



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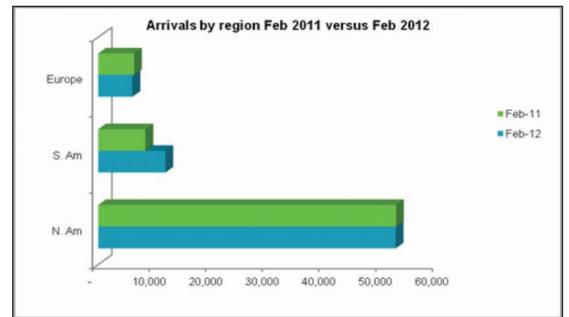


## Tourism Office announces February 2012 results

After the slight decrease in our tourism in January 2012, the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) is happy to report on the results for February 2012 which shows a nice growth of 5.67% in the amount of visitors compared to February a year ago (2011). In February 2011 Aruba received 68.755 visitors, while in February 2012 that amount went up to 72.656. This, in absolute figures is a difference of 3.901 more visitors than in February 2011. The February increase can be attributed primarily to the Latin American market.

#### Latin America:

In February this market increased by 42.5% followed by Venezuela with a growth of 55.2% compared to February 2011. This is equal to 7.016 visitors for Venezuela in February 2012 which is 2.496 more visitors than in February 2011. Next is Brazil, which has also grown by 50.7% or 654 more visitors than in 2011. Argentine grew by 32.7 or 280 more visitors than in 2011. Colombia grew by 23.5% representing a total of 149 more visitors compared to 2011.



#### **North America:**

Our principal market, North America, has grown by 0.48%. The North-East region has decreased by 1.1% while the Western, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West and South-East regions grew by 8.26%, 0.94%, 5.24% and 0.45% respectively. This represents a total of 223 more visitors. From Canada we saw a decrease of 5.5%. The interest from Canada to fly to Aruba was very high, but tour operators experienced several

"stop sales" cases because there were not enough rooms to sell. This was noted in several destinations, both in Europe and in Latin America.

#### **Europe:**

While the European market fell by 4.4%, the market in Holland and Germany grew by 7.3% and 28%. The Scandinavian Countries dropped by 2.8% and England also dropped by 21.9%.

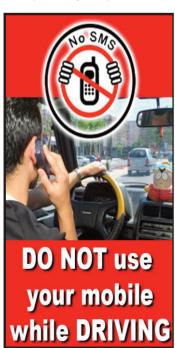
### **Cruise Activity (source APA):**

With respect to Cruise vis-

itors, the month of February 2012 grew by 4.3% compared to February 2011. In February 2011 Aruba received 90.384 cruise visitors while in February 2012 this increased and Aruba received 94.234 visitors. This, in absolute figures, is a difference of 3.850 more visitors than in 2011

ATA is very pleased with this increase and is happy to report this kind of growth. ATA is intent on continuing their emphasis on growth in quality. They believe that big challenges are ahead during this year to continue growing our economy through the tourism industry.

Together with their partners they are working diligently to combat any "softness" that could occasion a difference in the various markets. Additional budgets have been allocated to boost wherever this is necessary during the year ahead.



# Puppies of all ages and sizes on Pawrade for the Cas Animal 2012 Carnival Fundraiser



Small dog Queen Memenia



Small Dog Pancho Dooby



Small Dog runner up Pancho Brody

crowns as Queen and Pancho in the Large and Small dog categories.

Entrants and their human



1st runner up Large Dog Pancho Max

courtiers strutted their stuff on the stage for Judges Eva Wever, Co-founder of the AIR IN STYLE Fashion Week, Michael Douglas, an Aruban carnival costume designer, famed throughout the Caribbean and Nydia Dik, veterinarian with Natalie Booi at Animal Care Clinic in Paradera since February 1.

"The costumes and the candidates are nothing short of adorable," commented Michael Douglas. "This was great; I have never had so much fun, or made tougher decisions."

While the judges deliberated, those attending the event in the large lot south of



1st runner up Small dog Queen Petunia

the Westin were able to enjoy ice cold, islandbrewed Balashi Chill and barbecue from Buster's Garage in Palm Beach, of which 100% of the proceeds went to Cas Animal.

Cas Animal rescues stray, abandoned and abused dogs; the ultimate goal of the fundraiser is the construction of a proper no-kill shelter to comfortably accommodate 250 dogs, with an on-site clinic. Presently, the founder of Cas Animal, Kirsten Arndt, cares for almost 100 dogs and puppies in her home.

The judges chose as Carnival Queen in the Large Dog Category, Lady, a winged Neapolitan Mastiff and Pancho was Bongo, whose owner, Nikarad Ochoa, won last year in the same division with Scooby; both dogs are a local mixed-breed referred to as Cunucu Dogs.

The Small Dog Queen and Pancho were Memenia, a stylishly dressed pug and a six-month old Maltese, Dooby, who exchanged his beautiful blue crown for an authentic duplicate of a Roadmarch crown, made especially for the contest.

First runner-up Panchos were Max and Brody, in large and small, First runner-up Queens were Mada and Petunia in the large and small categories. Chocolate Lab companions Coco Chanel and Moose both took

second runner as Large Queen and Pancho. and 2nd runner up small dog was Queen Niki, owned by Westin GM Richard Roy.

A special mention was given to adorable Amenia, pretty in pink. Winners received bags of Beniful dog



Large dog Pancho winner Bongo with Nikarad

food complements of Compras NV, and Eline Lottera Homan, companion to Lady, immediately returned hers to the foundation to help feed the dogs in its care.

Rosalie Klein



Large Dog Queen 1st runner up Mada

Carnival was over on February 22, but Aruba's canine community still had the spirit for the 2nd Annual Foundation Cas Animal Doggy Carnival Pawrade. This fundraising event on Sunday, March 4, had 15 entrants dressed in carnival regalia competing for prizes and



Special mention Emenia



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# Big interest for Digicel Cellular phones during sale at Nacional field Blackberry remains the most popular model









Recently, Digicel held a remendous BBQ at the Nacional ball field, combined with a sale of its cellular phones. Many families went to the event, not only for the BBQ but also to take advantage of the tremendous offers Digicel had. Kids enjoyed the afternoon at the 'kids corner' with Dino Jump.

The dinamic Digicel team also had a nice day interchanging with clients in a nice familiar ambiance.

Before 11 in the morning there was already a long queue of people eager to get a hold of the latest Digicel cellular phone models. They expressed their satisfaction in the service they received; in a nice fast and orderly manner. They were also very pleased with the gift they received from Digicel.

The most popular models sold were the Blackberry 9100, 9300 and 9000. Also the Nokia 5530 sold out at an early stage.

Digicel scored once more, demonstrating that the company is always ready to please clients with the best service and offers.

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### TUESDAY AND FR

### **International News**

### Canada speaker says Anonymous hackers 'a threat'

OTTAWA (AFP) - Online videos posted by hacker group Anonymous pose a "direct threat" to Canada's public safety minister, the speaker of the House of Commons said

Speaker Andrew Scheen

said the language used in the YouTube postings "constitute a direct threat to the minister in particular, as well as other members" of parliament.

"These threats demonstrate a flagrant disregard of our tra-

ditions and a subversive attack on the most fundamental privileges of this House," he added.

Anonymous threatened to divulge embarrassing aspects of Public Safety Minister Vic Toews's personal life in retaliation for introducing a bill to give law enforcement authorities sweeping powers to probe online communications.

The group demanded the bill be scrapped and that Toews resign.

Scheer said "disturbing threats" against lawmakers for their work in parliament must be taken seriously.

He ruled the videos "constitute a prima facie question of privilege" and invited Toews to move to have the matter sent to the procedure and House affairs committee to investigate.

It is not clear how the committee would call the hackers to testify, however, given that they are anonymous.

### Israel 'surprised' by India arms sale ban

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Israel's defence ministry said on Tuesday it was surprised by India's decision to blacklist six weapons firms, including a top Israeli manufacturer, in connection with a 2009 bribery scandal.

"We are surprised by the Indian defence ministry's decision (against Israeli Military Industries) because the process of hearings over the intended sanctions against the company has not been completed," a ministry statement said.

On Monday, India announced it was blacklisting six armament firms for 10 years for allegedly bribing an Indian bureaucrat.

The sanctions targeted four foreign companies, namely Israel Military Industries (IMI), Singapore Technologies Kinetics Ltd, Switzerland's Rheinmetall Air Defence and Russia's Corporation Defence

The other two companies targeted -- RK Machine Tools Ltd and TS Kisan and Co Private Ltd -- are both Indian.

"The firms were recommended for blacklisting by the Central Bureau of Investiga-

tion on the basis of evidence collected against them," the

on Monday. "The decision to debar (the companies) was taken today after taking into consideration their replies," the statement

Indian defence ministry said

But the Israeli defence ministry said the decision was premature and unexpected, "especially in light of the fact that IMI had good reasons to oppose this measure."

In 2009, India froze deals worth \$1.5 billion with seven companies after police arrested a top defence ministry bureaucrat on charges he allegedly accepted bribes from the firms.

### Jamaican PM calls for 'full independence', before royal meet

LONDON (AFP) - Jamaica's Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller said it was time for the Caribbean island to cut all ties with Britain and ditch the monarchy, as she prepared to meet Prince Harry yesterday.

The prince, third-in-line to the British and Jamaican thrones, is touring Caribbean realms to mark Queen Elizabeth II's diamond jubilee year.

Jamaica achieved its independence from Britain in 1962 but retained the monarchy, meaning Queen Elizabeth is the island's head of state and Queen of Jamaica in her own

"We came on a long journey from slavery to adult suffrage to our independence and we are now a nation, I believe, our maturity is now saying that we should look to a form of government that would, at this

time, take full charge of our destiny," Simpson Miller said.

In one of the quirks of Jamaica's system, the Londonbased privy council remains the country's highest court of appeal.

Simpson Miller took office in January pledging to begin this year the process of becoming a republic.

She said there were other Commonwealth states in the Caribbean which have become republics, "so I do not believe it should be taken in the context of us wanting to get rid of the Queen."

She said that even if the monarch was replaced by a president, Queen Elizabeth would be welcome to visit Jamaica "at any time" and would be received "no less than we have received her in the past".

### Colombian rebels free 11 oil workers

BOGOTA (AFP) - Leftist rebels on Tuesday freed 11 oil workers who were taken captive last month near Colombia's border with Venezuela, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

The ICRC said the group of workers, who were employed contractor Consorcio Casanare Avanzada, were turned over by members of the National Liberation Army, or ELN by its Spanish acronym, in a rural area of the department of Arauca.

"We have undertaken this operation at the direct request of the armed group and the families," said Michael Kramer, who heads the ICRC delegation in Colombia.

The workers were involved in the construction of a 960kilometer (600-mile) pipeline for Colombian state oil company Ecopetrol when they were taken captive by rebels on February 28.

With an estimated 2,500 fighters, the ELN is the second largest guerrilla group in Colombia after the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, which has some 9,000 combatants.



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### **International News**

# Libya rules out British visit on Lockerbie



Libyan Interior Minister Fawzi Abdelali

TRIPOLI (AFP) - Libya's interior minister on Tuesday ruled out a visit by British police to investigate the 1988 Lockerbie bombing or the killing of British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher almost two decades

"There is no treaty between Britain and Libya to allow such a thing," Fawzi Abdelali told AFP in a joint interview with a British newspaper, adding that London had some explaining to do on its own dealings with Moamer Kadhafi's ousted regime.

"Why did they shut up about this all these years and bring it up now, when we are in a period of transition and building up our institutions from scratch after decades of dictatorship," the minister asked.

"Do you remember when Fletcher was killed? We are now in 2012. Where was the British government from 1984 until 2011," asked the former district attorney, who now has access to tens of thousands of files on Kadhafi's dealings with world leaders.

In a December interview with British daily The Guardian, Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt said the new authorities had agreed to cooperate on the two cases and given the green light for UK

investigators to visit the country

For his part, Abdelali said he wanted allegations to be investigated by the ousted leader's jailed son Seif al-Islam that former British prime minister Tony Blair had acted as a political adviser to his father.

Blair played a key role in repairing diplomatic ties between the two countries and visited the north African nation several times after 2004.

A Scottish court in 2001 convicted Megrahi but he was released on compassionate grounds in 2009 after doctors said he had terminal cancer and only three months left to live. Megrahi is still alive, said to be on his deathbed.

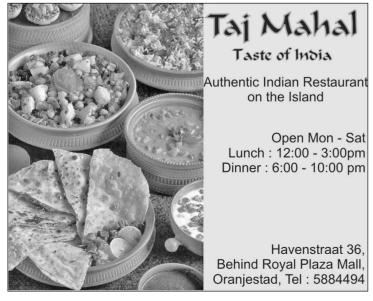
The minister proposed that the British government ask Libyan authorities to open an investigation inside Libya, and the Libyan side would then share its findings with police in Britain.

But any decision would have to await the election of a new government in Libya, which is expected to vote on a constituent assembly in the last week of June, Abdelali stressed.

London has also been seeking information on the 1984 murder of British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher during a demonstration outside the Libyan embassy in the British capital.

Libya's new rulers have promised to find and bring to trial the main surviving suspect in the case, her former colleague, retired police officer John Murray, said last September.

The fatal shots were believed to have come from within the embassy, but all the staff were deported back to Libya under diplomatic immunity and no charges have ever been brought.







To whom it may concern:

Subject: The transfer of the business from the Aruban branch of American Home Assurance Company to Chartis Aruba Insurance Company N.V.

We hereby inform you that pursuant to section 6, paragraph 1 of the State Ordinance on the Supervision of the Insurance Business (AB 2000 no. 82) and the Central Bank of Aruba's (CBA) Policy rule insurance license requirements and admission requirements for insurance companies operating in or from Aruba, written authorization from the CBA has been obtained to transfer the business of the Aruban branch of American Home Assurance Company to Chartis Aruba Insurance Company N.V., a locally incorporated Aruban entity.

The existing insurance portfolio of the Aruban branch of American Home Assurance Company has therefore been transferred to Chartis Aruba Insurance Company N.V. effective March 1, 2012. The aforementioned transfer to Chartis Aruba Insurance Company N.V. will not affect existing policy conditions.

In accordance with the CBA's guidelines with regard to the transfer of rights and obligations from insurance agreements, during a period of 60 days following the date of this announcement, all policyholders are entitled to terminate their general insurance agreement in writing. In such case, we shall refund the prepaid premium proportionally to the part of the period not yet lapsed.

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# Obama warns against unilateral action in Syria

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama Tuesday described the violence in Syria as "heartbreaking," but cautioned there was no simple solution, warning unilateral military action would be a mistake

"What's happening in Syria is heartbreaking, and outrageous, and what you've seen is the international community mobilize against the Assad regime," Obama told a White House press conference.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has "lost legitimacy of his people. And the actions that he is now taking against his own people is inexcusable," the president told journalists.

"On the other hand, for us to take military action, unilaterally, as some have suggested, or to think that somehow there's some simple solution, I think is a mistake."

On Monday, top Republican Senator John McCain called for US air strikes on Syrian forces to protect population centers and create safe havens for opponents of the regime.

"Time is running out," Mc-Cain said, with the United Nations reporting more than 7,500 people killed in Syria in the past year. He added "the only realistic way" to save civilian lives was "with foreign air power."

But Obama cautioned the situation was not the same as in Libya, when the United States used its air force to back a NATO no-fly zone.

In Libya, the United States "had the full cooperation of the region, Arab states, and we knew that we could execute very effectively in a relatively short period of time. This is a much more complicated situation," he said.

"Ultimately, this dictator will fall, as dictators in the past have fallen. But the notion that the way to solve every one of these problems is to deploy our military, you know, that hasn't been true in the past, and it won't be true now," Obama added

Amid the escalating violence in Syria, a flurry of diplomatic initiatives has been launched separately by the Arab League, the United Nations, Russia and China -- all aimed at ending the year-long tumult.

Former UN chief Kofi Annan is to launch a mission aimed at Assad to silence the guns blamed for thousands of deaths since anti-regime protests broke out last March.

He is to hold talks with Arab leaders in Cairo before he heads to the Syrian capital on Saturday as joint special envoy for the United Nations and the 22-member Arab League.

### **Health & Living**

### **Cuba to test new AIDS** vaccine on humans



HAVANA (AFP) - Cuba's top biotech teams have successfully tested a new AIDS vaccine on mice, and are ready to soon begin human testing, a leading researcher told a biotechnology conference in Havana on Monday.

"The new AIDS trial vaccine already was tested successfully (on mice) and now we are preparing a very small, tightly controlled phase one clinical trial" with HIV-positive patients who are not in the advanced stages of disease, researcher Enrique Iglesias said.

Iglesias, who heads up the vaccine development team at the Biotech and Genetic Engineering Center (CIGB) here, was speaking at the International Biotech Conference-Havana 2012, which started Monday in Cuba's capital.

He told the crowd at the convention center that the vaccine TERAVAC-HIV-1 was made from recombinant proteins aiming "to cause a cellular response against the (HIV) virus."

While upbeat, the Cuban expert was quick to downplay high hopes for a long-awaited successful AIDS vaccine.

"So far, there have been more than 100 clinical tests (on humans) with HIV" in Cuba and other countries, "and all of them have failed," he stressed



Please remember to check your breasts every month

Cuba, the Americas' only one-party Communist-ruled state, spends more than \$200 million a year on its AIDS prevention and care programs, including free care with antiretrovirals, some of them Cuban-made.

The CIGB, which groups about 20 research units on Havana's leafy western end, is the engine behind a major Cuban export: biotech products including vaccines and other drugs.

The Caribbean country exports \$400 million a year in these products, making them its official number-two export after nickel.

Some 600 scientists from about 38 countries are taking part in the event including Nobel-winning US chemist Peter Agre, also a medical doctor and molecular biologist.

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### **New health concerns** about 'fake pot' in US



WASHINGTON (AFP) - A type of fake pot has raised new health concerns in the United States after at least three users were hospitalized for kidney failure, authorities in the western state of Wyoming said Monday.

Often known as "Spice" or "K2," the substance is marketed to young people as herbal incense, and creates a marijuana-like high when it is smoked like a joint or a ciga-

"At this point we are viewing use of this drug as a potenlife-threatening tially situation," Tracy Murphy, state epidemiologist with the Wyoming Department of Health, said in a statement sent

State health authorities first learned of the latest incidents on Thursday involving three patients in central Wyoming who sought hospital care after smoking a product known as "blueberry spice," a spokeswoman added.

However, drug policy experts say that fake pot use has been on the rise in recent years, ever since it was first copied from a US scientist's lab research in the mid 1990s and quickly spread around the world.

The compound, known as JWH-018, was created in the lab of John Huffman, a professor of organic chemistry at Clem-

son University, who was researching how marijuana-like compounds act on brain recep-

According to the US Drug Enforcement Agency, which in 2011 banned JWH-018 and four other synthetic cannabinoids, calls to poison control centers rose from just over 100 in 2009 to more than 2,700 nationwide in the space of a year.

"Technically it is an incense, it is not for human consumption, you know what I am saying?" said a smoke shop owner in Arizona who asked not to be named.

He said he continues to stock three kinds of herbal incense, but none that carry ingredients outlawed by the DEA.

"If there is a banned substance in there, then we don't have it in our store," he told AFP by phone, adding that brands and popularity change frequently.

### **US VP Biden stands** firm in Latin America drug debate

MEXICO CITY (AFP) - US Vice President Joe Biden said in Mexico Monday that he was open to joining a growing Latin American debate about legalizing drugs but only to show that a change of policy would not work.

Biden's two-day visit to Mexico and Central America comes amid frustration about the failure of US-backed efforts to combat regional drug violence and new debate about decriminalizing drugs spearheaded by Guatemala.

"It's totally legitimate for this to be raised, and the reason it warrants a discussion is, that on examination, you realize that there are more problems with legalization than non-legalization, including the notion of taking the criminal element out of the system," Biden told reporters in Mexico City.

Biden pointed to the "unquestioned negative health effects" of many drugs which could be decriminalized and said consumption would inevitably rise if they were made legal.

The US vice president said he discussed the frustration and anxiety of communities affected by Mexico's raging drug violence -- blamed for some 50,000 deaths since 2006 -with Mexican President Felipe Calderon.

He said that taking down

drug gang leaders would not alone solve the problem, and that both the United States and Mexico could do more to tackle related issues such as money laundering.

PALM BEACH # 184

Calderon, for his part, reiterated his call for the need to strengthen "actions against arms trafficking to our country" -- with some 90 percent of illegal weapons estimated to come from the United States -- and to tackle money laundering, in a statement from the Mexican presidency.

Biden also met with the three main candidates to take over from Calderon, who can only stand for one term under the constitution -- ahead of the presidential election here on July 1.

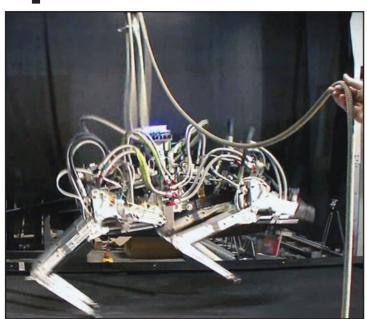
When asked whether he saw any change in US-Mexico relations with any of the candidates, Biden said: "No, and I'm not being flippant about it, but

Biden was due in Honduras also to hold bilateral talks with President Porfirio Lobo and meet with Central American leaders.

Around 90 percent of the cocaine which arrives in the United States passes through Central America and Mexico, where drug-related violence has increased in recent years, as well as the production of synthetic drugs.

### Sci-Tech

# **US robotic 'cheetah' breaks speed records**



This video image frame grab obtained courtesy of DARPA, shows a demonstration of the "Cheetah" robot galloping.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Pentagon's main research agency has created the fastest-ever land robot, named "Cheetah," which can gallop at a speed of 18 miles (29 kilometers) per hour, scientists said this week.

The headless robot looks about the size of a small dog and is shown running on a treadmill in pictures and video released Monday by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

"The robot's movements are patterned after those of fast-running animals in nature," DARPA said in a statement

"The robot increases its stride and running speed by flexing and un-flexing its back on each step, much as an actual cheetah does."

Cheetah's dash has set a "new land speed record for legged robots," besting the previous holder of 13.1 mph (21 kph) set in 1989, the agency added.

The robot was created with the help of Boston Dynamics in Waltham, Massachusetts as part of DARPA's Maximum Mobility and Manipulation (M3) program which seeks to advance robotic technology.

Someday, such speedy robots could better help the US military with missions to dispose of roadside bombs and navigate other battlefield perils, the secretive agency said, declining an interview request for more information.

"The use of ground robots in military explosive-ordinance-disposal missions already saves many lives and prevents thousands of other casualties," the DARPA statement said.

"If the current limitations on mobility and manipulation capabilities of robots can be overcome, robots could much more effectively assist warfighters across a greater range of missions."

The machine is essentially a laboratory animal for now, powered by an off-board hydraulic pump. A boom-like device helps it stay on track in the center of the treadmill.

But Alfred Rizzi, Boston Dynamics chief robotics scientist, said field tests for a freerunning machine are planned for later this year.

Another robot design known as LS3 aims to build on the Big Dog by carrying more weight and traveling further, going "anywhere soldiers and marines go on foot," the company said in a release.

### Running the country? There's an app for that



A tailored iPad app is being developed for David Cameron and his senior colleagues at a cost of £20,000 so they can instantly access government data, in a project dubbed "Dave's Dashboard".

The prime minister, known to be a fan of Apple's tablet computer, will have at his fingertips statistics on the performance of government departments as well as figures on polling, markets, inflation, crime and other key areas.

"The app is for the prime minister and his ministerial colleagues and senior officials to have somewhere to access data and monitor the performance of government services," a spokesman for Cameron's office said.

"It's about bringing all this data into one place."

The app is in development by the Cabinet Office with no specific timeframe for its completion, the spokesman said

"It's hoped that it can eventually be developed for wider use," he added.

The app's price tag far eclipses the three most expensive apps available to the public, each of which costs about US\$1,000 (£635), according to PC Magazine.

Cameron has used iPads since 2010, when they were first released, and has spoken about his addiction to playing games on the tablet.

He has previously told the Telegraph that he has completed every level of the game Angry Birds and then turned to playing Fruit Ninja, which calls itself "the most popular fruit-slicing game in the world".



#### **Lunch Buffet** Saturday - Sunday

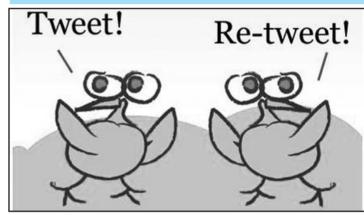
3aturday - Sunda 12:00 - 3 p.m.

#### **Dinner**

Monday - Sunday 6:00 - 11:00 p.m

Palm Beach Center - Palm Beach Aruba - Tel: 5860944

# Russia, US spar over protests on Twitter



(AFP) - Russia on Tuesday took to Twitter to denounce an earlier tweet from the US ambassador about the rough handling of activists who tried to stage a sit-in protest over Vladimir Putin's election win.

The pointed exchange between the foreign ministry and US ambassador Michael McFaul followed the arrest of more than 600 demonstrators in Moscow and Saint Petersburg on Monday after Putin's triumph in presidential elections.

All the demonstrators were released overnight but several opposition movement leaders who called for a sit-in on Moscow's central Pushkin Square face the threat of penalties or jail terms of up to 15 days.

"Troubling to watch arrests of peaceful demonstrators at Pushkin Square," McFaul tweeted shortly after helmeted riot police moved in to break up the rally

"Freedom of assembly and freedom of speech are universal values," he said.

McFaul was the architect of US President Barack Obama's "reset" in ties with the more reform-minded outgoing President Dmitry Medvedev. But he vexed Moscow on his arrival in January by immediately meeting with top anti-Putin leaders.

The Russian foreign ministry's response to Twitter user @McFaul was quick and biting.

ing.

"The police on Pushkin Square were many times more humane that what we witnessed with the dispersal of the Occupy Wall Street protests and the tent cities in Europe," the foreign ministry said.

McFaul also received an angry reply from Arkady Dvorkovich -- the economic adviser of Medvedev.

"And the detention of protesters in the US -- is this normal?" Dvorkovich asked.



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#### **PICKLES**







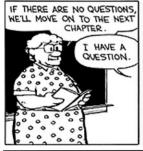


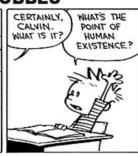
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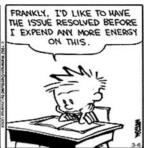


#### CALVIN and HOBBES









### CROSSWORD



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#### Telephone 911

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# Tel: 5673356 / 5838989 Sudoku

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**Occidental Grand** 

1bedroom Supreme Mandatory all inclusive booked wk 9 rm #2013 \$13000

2x Jr,Suite, always 9th Floor Ocean View \$14500 each 2x 2bedroom Supreme 3bath Ocean Front week 2 tru 17(reserved week 9 and 10 2013) \$28000 each 1bedroom Royal Club Ocean view

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Paradise Beach Villas

2 br wk 8 room #128 ocean front \$20.000

La Cabana Beach Club

1br DLX wk 9 Room#401D Ocean Front \$11000

Casa Del Mar

2br wk 9 rm #1208, pool/ocean view \$19500

1br wk 11 Room#2104 right on the infinity pool

33 weeks left on the contract for \$8500 1 br wk 5 thru 9 room #4226 \$9000

1 br wk 10 room #2257 \$16000

Gulf and Ocean View, 36 wks left on contract

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1 br wk 8 room #2303 Pool/Ocean view \$11000 1 br wk 11 room # 2507 Pool/Ocean view \$11000

1 br wk 12 rm #2327 pool/ocean view \$9000

Divi Phoenix

1br wk 10 rm #1206 Ocean View \$9000 (26 weeks left on contract)

1 br week 10 Room #802 Ocean View \$9000 (24 wks remain on contract 10 can be accelerated)

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### **Finance**

# Stanford found guilty over \$7 bn Ponzi scheme

HOUSTON (AFP) - Financier and cricket mogul Allen Stanford was found guilty of perpetrating a \$7 billion Ponzi scheme, a US jury declared yesterday.

The mustachioed ex-tycoon had pleaded not guilty to bilking 30,000 investors from more than 100 countries through bogus investments with Stanford International Bank.

Jurors found him guilty of 13 of 14 counts of fraud, conspiracy, money laundering and obstruction of justice which carry maximum sentences of up to 20 years in jail.

Stanford, 61, has spent the past three years in jail after being deemed a flight risk shortly after his February 2009

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TWEEKEND

arrest

Badly beaten in a jailhouse brawl, the flamboyant Texan was temporarily declared unfit for trial after he became addicted to painkillers while also on antidepressants.

He tried to have his case completely dismissed after claiming that the beating and drugs destroyed his memory, but a judge refused to believe him.

Defense attorneys at trial tried to shift the blame to former chief financial officer James Davis, who he said perpetrated the entire fraud while Stanford naively placed his trust in his former college roommate.

They also insisted that the bulk of investor money was lost due to mismanagement by court-appointed receivers after the US government seized the bank.

Prosecutors scoffed at the notion, and said Stanford funded his lavish lifestyle by siphoning off \$2 billion in investor deposits while pushing "bogus" certificates of deposits which promised artificially high returns based on "safe" investments.

Investigators could not find 92 percent of the \$8 billion the bank said it had in assets and cash reserves.

As a dual citizen of the United States and the Caribbean country of Antigua and Barbuda, Stanford was known for conspicuous largesse, especially on the two paradise islands.

In the West Indies he created the Stanford 20/20 Cricket tournament which, in 2008, captured a global television audience of 300 million.

With a fortune of \$2.2 billion, Forbes Magazine ranked Stanford as the 605th richest person in the world in 2006. After most of those funds were frozen by the courts, Stanford was forced to accept appointed counsel.

But his personal fiefdom began to crumble when it attracted scrutiny from US financial regulators and he was charged by the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with fraud in February 2009 and arrested a few months later at his girlfriend's home in the US state of Virginia.

In Antigua, Stanford was the island's largest employer and the recipient of a 2006 knighthood, but after the allegations against him surfaced, much of his support dwindled and the England and Wales Cricket Board severed ties with him.

# Slim beats Gates in first Daily Billionaire Ranking

Carlos Slim, the telecommunications tycoon who controls Mexico's America Movil SAB (AMXL), is the richest person on Earth, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, a daily ranking of the world's 20 wealthiest individuals.

The 72-year-old's net worth fell \$478.4 million in a day to \$68.5 billion as of the close of markets on March 2, as U.S. moguls Bill Gates and Warren Buffett placed second and third on the list compiled by Bloomberg News. Brazil's Eike

Batista, who ranks 10th, still covets the top spot after vowing a year ago that he'd become the world's wealthiest man by 2015.

The Bloomberg Billionaires Index takes measure of the world's wealthiest people based on market and economic changes and Bloomberg News reporting. Each net worth figure is updated every business day at 5:30 p.m. in New York. The valuations are listed in U.S. dollars.

#### Today's ranking of the 10 world's richest people

Name	Est. Net Worth	Ctry				
1. Carlos Slim Helú	\$ 68.4 billion	MEX				
2. William Henry Gates III	\$ 62.1 billion					
USA						
3. Warren E. Buffett	\$ 44.3 billion	USA				
4. Ingvar Kamprad	\$ 42.7 billion	<b>SWE</b>				
5.Bernard Arnault	\$ 42.5 billion	FRA				
6. Amancio Ortega Gaona	\$ 38.9 billion	SPN				
7. Lawrence Joseph Ellison	\$ 38.2 billion	USA				
8. Charles De Ganahl Koch	\$ 33.9 billion	USA				
<ol><li>David Hamilton Koch</li></ol>	\$ 33.9 billion	USA				
10. Eike Fuhrken Batista	\$ 29.7 billion	BRA				

# Lehman exits bankruptcy to repay debt and vanish

NEW YORK CITY (AFP) - The debtors of Lehman Brothers, whose stunning collapse in 2008 sparked global financial panic, emerged from a record bankruptcy yesterday in a step toward the final chapter for the once-powerful Wall Street investment bank.

The liquidators running Lehman Brothers Holdings said it had exited Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and would begin repaying creditors, whose claims total about \$450 billion.

Lehman said payments to creditors were to begin on April 17 with a \$10 billion payout as it heads toward a "complete liquidation" of the remaining assets, valued at

Japan

(per 10,000)

roughly \$65 billion.

The country's largest ever bankruptcy three years ago triggered an unprecedented shock to the global financial system. Before its collapse, Lehman Brothers, one of Wall Street's most prestigious firms, had \$639 billion in assets, with business in more than 40 countries.

In November the creditors of the former fourth-largest US investment bank approved a liquidation plan; a bankruptcy judge gave the go-ahead in December

Collectively, creditors claim about \$450 billion. They are expected to receive less than a seventh of their initial claims.



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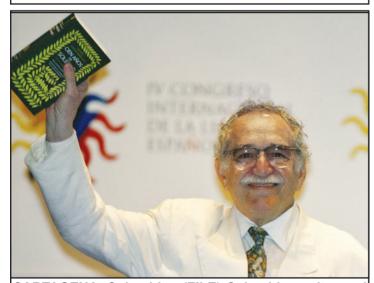


# Correction on winners of TMN photo contest



Photo by Janet Mcintyr, 3rd place winner

We must apologize, but in our announcement in Tuesday's paper, we mistakenly identified the 2nd place winning photo of the adorable canine carnival queen by Sarita Ramdas as the photo by 3rd place winner Janet Mcintyr. Things can get quite hectic here at THE MORNING NEWS office as the daily deadline approaches, and we sincerely regret the mix-up and again thank them for their participation.



CARTAGENA, Colombia: (FILE) Colombian writer and Nobel Prize laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez raises the first copy of a commemorative edition of his most outstanding work "Cien años de Soledad" (One Hundred Years of Solitude), during the opening of the IV International Congress of the Spanish Language, in Cartagena, Colombia, 26 March 2007. Yesterday Garcia Marquez turned 85, and celebrated it with the digital edition of his emblematic novel "Cien Años de Soledad", publishing house Mondadori.

# PALMARUBA may be just what you are looking for...



PalmAruba Managing Director Victor Acosta

"Sometimes I felt just like Goldilocks and The Three Bears," confided an island visitor of their search for the perfect condominium property on Aruba. "We found one property was either too big or another too small; we were really looking for something in the right area that gave us a sense of community, but had a bit more of a resort feel we like -we are still looking."

Perhaps this couple, and many like them, seeking that ideal condominium facility should stop by the offices of PALMARUBA to learn about the exciting new project that is like Momma Bear- a comfortable fit that is "just right."

The project is the dream of veteran real estate developer Victor Acosta, well known to owners at Palma Real, Oceania, and Montana Plaza, all very popular projects that saw successful completion. Victor has done both big and small, and it has long been his dream to create small to mid-size project he noticed many potential clients were seeking; from his experience he also has noticed such a complex would be much more efficient to run.

PALMARUBA has a superior location in the heart of Palm

Beach, with sufficient distance to create a tranquil oasis away from the hustle and bustle of the main strip, but close enough to all the action that a pleasant stroll allows residents to avail themselves of all the casinos and amenities and of course, Aruba's beaches. When completed, PALMARUBA will provide shuttle service to the beach (and airport) for its owners and their guests, several times a day.

Actually, all amenities of PALMARUBA, the pool, Jacuzzi, fitness room, restaurant, tennis court, game room, concierge services and 24/7 security will all come online along with the opening of the facility, as it is Victor's

intention to only open when

dining and nightlife, but all anyone who is living here needs in the way of shopping and services, less than 5 minutes walk away."

During the planning, rising energy costs were kept in mind, and the PalmAruba complex will make as much use of renewable energy technology as possible, thus reducing utility costs for their condo owners.

The spacious, affordable units range from a 1 bedroom/bath of 76 sq meters to luxurious 3 bed/bath penthouses of 224 sq meters. For those that are seeking something truly unique, check out the "Sugar Palm" design with an extra bed and bath in a duplex loft. The project will boast 5 floors, offering spectacular views of the sea and shore from the upper level terraces. Other vital services, such as



everything is ready. "I have seen those who bought in first to various projects have to suffer with the noise and inconvenience of constant construction," explains Victor of his plan, "and I do not want that for our clients. Because we will only offer 76 units we will complete the entire project by the end of 2014 and present it to our owners as a fait accompli, so they may fully enjoy the promised rest and relaxation that was why they purchased in the first place. We are particularly pleased with this Palm Beach location as the area has built up over the past few years to not only offer Aruba's best

maid, babysitting and catering for special parties, as well as rental of the condo when not in use, can be arranged through the PALMARUBA Management services.

So if you are looking for that perfect fit, one that is not too small or too large, as well as an experienced developer with a track record you can trust, then pay a visit to the PAL-MARUBA offices next to the Palm Beach gas station. Call them at 586-7300 for an appointment to learn of their excellent pre-construction prices. You can also visit them at: www.palaruba.com or follow them on Facebook or Twitter.

## Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready in-

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and fami-lies, famed hotelier Ed Ma-lone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline pick-up

and drop-off; they even boast high-speed fiber-optic Intera shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spa-

net connection, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are cious, offering privacy for available for a modest fee parents or a few couples. Concierge services to arrange



Beautifully appointed kitchens and bathrooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All homes come with cable TV,



rental cars, spa appointments activities and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting on line at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba com to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.

## **Excellent dining, charming** ambiance and a breathtaking view found only at La Trattoria El Faro Blanco

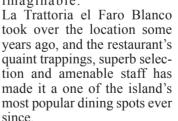


Stunning sunset



Over twenty years ago, a very clever person had the idea of placing a cozy little restaurant on the top of the cliff adjacent to the California Lighthouse, offering the most stunning

imaginable.



Savoring the sight of a spectacular Aruban sunset and the tiered layout of the eatery also makes it the ideal spot for marking a special occasion, your budget.

the best unobstructed view, what is fresh for the season.



recommending reservations well in advance if this is important to you.

The restaurant is now open from early in the day for refreshments, and is the perfect lunch stop while touring, serving from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, after which visitors can enjoy a light snack from their Pizza Mini Menu until 6:00 PM when they officially open for dinner, until 11:00 PM.

All these aspects of charmsuch as an anniversary or a ing surroundings, dining al marriage proposal, as well as a fresco with a breathtaking perfect venue for weddings or view (or in their enclosed aira celebratory party. An exten- conditioned dining room, if sive and diverse menu and you prefer) and fine food wine list allows those planning makes La Trattoria El Faro the a special festivity will be able single dining experience that to devise a memorable event must not be missed before deand management is ready and parting Aruba. Reservations willing to help you stay within can be made by calling 586 0786 or 586-0787, or via e-Many have taken note of mail link at their website, this singular location as the www.aruba-latrattoria.com, place to go for that memorable where you can peruse their latromantic meal, and their reserest menu, as Chef Alberto is alvation staff reports a waiting ways devising some tasty new list for the rail tables that offer specialty to take advantage of



### **SPORTS**

# Football: Chelsea start life after Villas-Boas with Cup win



Chelsea's English midfielder Gary Cahill (R) beats Birmingham City's Serbian forward Nikola Zigic.

BIRMINGHAM (AFP) - Chelsea secured their place in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup with a 2-0 win away to

15 MINUTE ENGLISH LIFESTYLE & NEWS SHOW

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Birmingham City on Tuesday as the Blues played their first match since the sacking of manager Andre Villas-Boas.

Two goals in six secondhalf minutes by Juan Mata and Raul Meireles ensured Roberto di Matteo, who helped Chelsea land five trophies in six years as a player, got his reign as caretaker manager of the west London club off to a winning start.

Chelsea, who started with midfielder Frank Lampard and striker Didier Drogba on the substitutes' bench, were sluggish in the first half before booking a last-eight tie at home to another Championship club in Leicester on March 18.

Former Italy midfielder di Matteo kept senior players Lampard and Drogba out of his starting side, with the pair on the bench alongside regular captain John Terry, who has been out since January with a knee injury.

There were five changes in all to the Chelsea side that lost 1-0 at West Brom three days earlier in Portuguese boss Villas-Boas's final game in charge.

The di Matteo era almost got off to a dream start when Mata found himself in space inside the Birmingham penalty area in the second minute.

But instead of squaring the ball to Salomon Kalou for an easy tap-in, the Spaniard went for glory only for keeper Colin Doyle to make the save.

Birmingham lost striker Nikola Zigic for four minutes while the Serb received stitches after an accidental boot to the head from David Luiz.

Their first-half display was summed up when Ramires burst into the Birmingham penalty area but, under pressure, the Brazilian fired his shot wide.

Birmingham, who had already claimed one top-flight FA Cup scalp in the shape of Wolves, grew more confident as the tie wore on.

In the dying moments of the first half, Chelsea's Fernando Torres spurned a great chance to fire his side ahead when he screwed his shot horribly wide from 16-yards.

It was left to Torres's fellow Spaniard Mata to make the allimportant breakthrough as Chelsea killed off Birmingham with two quick goals.

A 54th minute cross by Ramires caused major problems in the home defence and, after Kalou had an effort blocked, Mata prodded the loose ball over the line.

That may have been a scrappy goal but Meireles's 60th minute effort was good enough to grace an FA Cup final -- let alone a fifth round replay.

The Portuguese gave Doyle no chance with a 25-yard strike after more good work by Ramires.

Chelsea could even afford to miss a 69th minute penalty after Torres was brought down by Guirane N'Daw, Doyle doing well to keep out Mata's

### Tennis: Djokovic, Wozniacki defend Indian Wells crowns

INDIAN WELLS (AFP) - World No. 1 Novak Djokovic and fourth-ranked Caroline Wozniacki will defend their titles at the \$11 million Indian Wells ATP and WTA hardcourt event that begins on today.

The record prize purse for ATP-WTA events outside majors includes \$1 million for both the men's and women's singles champion. Women's main draw matches begin on Today. The men open Thursday. High seeds have first-round byes.

Serbian star Djokovic captured Indian Wells as part of a stunning 2011 start of 41 match wins in a row. Djokovic began 2012 by winning the Australian Open crown but he lost to Britain's Andy Murray in last week's Dubai Open semi-finals.

Djokovic, a five-time Grand Slam champion who could claim his fourth Slam title in a row by winning the French Open in June, beat Spanish World No. 2 Rafael Nadal in the 2011 Indian Wells final and also took the trophy in 2008.

Nadal, the 2007 and 2009 Indian Wells champion, will threaten again, as will three-time Indian Wells winner Roger Federer, the Swiss legend who has won 33 of his past 35 matches and five titles, and Murray.

World No. 3 Federer, who has won a record 16 Grand Slam titles, beat World No. 4 Murray in last week's Dubai

Open final and hopes to bring that momentum to the California desert.

Murray hopes slower courts at US events in March at Indian Wells and Miami will give him an edge.

Denmark's Wozniacki has lost her World No. 1 ranking and defends full points at Indian Wells, but is more concerned about form than jumping back up the list and said she does not feel extra pressure defending the crown.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Kim Clijsters of Belgium will miss the event with a left ankle injury suffered at the Australian Open.

Reigning Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka of Belarus was forced out of last year's Indian Wells quarter-final against Wozniacki with an injury and the World No. 1 withdrew from last month's Dubai Open.

World No. 2 Maria Sharapova, a three-time Grand Slam champion coming off a runnerup effort at the Australian Open, won the 2006 Indian Wells title and reached last year's semi-finals before falling to Wozniacki.

Other contenders include reigning Wimbledon champion and World No. 3 Petra Kvitova, a Czech left-hander; sixth-ranked reigning US Open champion Samantha Stosur of Australia and China's eighth-ranked Li Na, the 2011 French Open winner.







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# Baseball: Judge orders Mets owners to pay, face trial

NEW YORK (AFP) - New York Mets owners Fred Wilpon and Saul Katz must pay up to \$83.3 million for their deal with Bernie Madoff, the US financier jailed for running a Ponzi scheme, a federal judge ruled Monday.

And the baseball club owners face a trial that is scheduled to start later this month and could cost them even more.

The Mets owners turned to Madoff when his funds were returning profits at a time when stocks were struggling, only to watch as Madoff was arrested and sent behind bars for a fraud scheme that bilked money from thousands of victims.

Irving Picard, a trustee trying to recover funds on behalf of Madoff victims, has targeted the Mets owners, saying they turned a willfully blind eye to signs that something improper was taking place and must pay for not acting.

Even as the Major League Baseball team was preparing for the season to begin in less than a month, US District Court Judge Jed Rakoff ruled against a Wilpon motion to dismiss the case.

"We are preparing for trial," Wilpon-held Sterling Partners said in a statement issued on Monday. "We look forward to demonstrating that we were



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Tel: 588-9517 / Fax: 588-9518 E-mail: themorningnewsaruba@gmail.com Website: www.themorningnewsaruba.com not willfully blind to the Madoff fraud."

Rakoff ruled Monday that the Mets owners must pay up to \$83.3 million to Picard and go to a jury trial set to begin on March 19 with as much as \$303 million at stake.

Only \$1.7 million of the \$83.3 million total is from accounts associated with the Mets. The rest comes from other Wilpon businesses and holdings.

Picard, whose original lawsuit sought \$1 billion, wants another \$303 million from Wilpon and Katz as they try to sell minority shares in the club at \$20 million.

The team has struggled on the field with a woeful record and with dwindling attendance as the Mets have sent away high-priced stars because owners are faced with an uncertain financial future as a result of the case.

## FIFA apologizes to Brazil ... continued from page 16

A senior FIFA official meanwhile said Tuesday that there was no doubt that the opening game of the 2014 World Cup will be held as planned in Sao Paulo's Corinthians stadium, which is currently under construction.

"We don't have any doubt that the opening of the World Cup will take place in the Corinthians stadium," Fulvio Danilas, FIFA general manager, told reporters.

Danilas was part of a joint team of 40 experts from FIFA and Brazil's Local Organizing Committee (LOC) that began a tour of six of the 12 cities that will stage World Cup games: Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Curitiba, Cuiaba, Manaus and Natal.

Sao Paulo was the team's first stop for a look at progress in the construction of the 65,000-seat Corinthians arena which began last May with a year's delay and should be finished at the end of next year.

Danilas stressed that the FIFA-LOC team was on a strictly "working visit" and would not get involved in the controversy.

The team members donned white helmets to tour the sprawling construction site -- a \$463 million project undertaken by Brazil's engineering and construction giant Odebrecht.

"The work is 29 percent complete," Frederico Barbosa, Odebrecht operations manager, told AFP. "The foundations have been laid. The outer structures are up. Everything is going according to plan."

"This a cause for pride," said Gilmar Tadeu, the city secretary for the 2014 World Cup. "We think that the contribution of Sao Paulo is rather positive."

He said the Sao Paulo stadium would definitely be completed by the end of 2013.

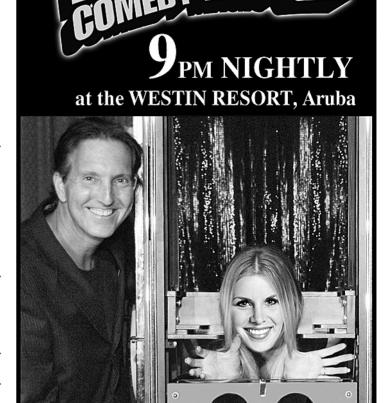
And FIFA was anxiously waiting for a legislative panel to approve a bill on the World Cup later Tuesday, ahead of its endorsement by a plenary session of both houses of Congress.

Football's governing body has voiced concerned about delays in approving the bill.

One key issue is the current ban on beer sales in Brazilian stadiums.

Sales of alcoholic beverages in sports arenas have been banned in Brazil since 2003, but the bill now making its way through Congress would create an exception, allowing beer to be sold in plastic cups at World Cup matches.

FIFA has an agreement with its sponsor, the US-based Anheuser-Busch brand Budweiser, and prohibiting beer sales would cut into the football organization's revenues from the games.



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# NBA: League-best Bulls stretch win streak to seven games

CHICAGO (AFP) - Britain's Luol Deng scored 20 points while Derrick Rose and John Lucas each added 13 to power host Chicago over Indiana 92-72 on Monday and stretch the Bulls' NBA win streak to seven games.

The Bulls improved their NBA-best record to 32-8 while snapping Indiana's sixgame win streak. The Pacers fell to 23-13, seven games off Chicago's pace in the Central division.

Chicago's Joakim Noah grabbed a game-high 17 re-

bounds while Rose contributed a game-high nine assists for the Bulls.

Indiana's Paul George scored a game-high 21 points while George Hill added 17 in a losing cause.

The Bulls did not gain any ground in the quest for the NBA's best overall record, however.

The Oklahoma City Thunder, the Western Conference leaders with the NBA's second-best record, improved to 30-8 with a 95-91 home victory over reigning NBA

champion Dallas.

Russell Westbrook scored 24 points and Kevin Durant added 22 to lead the Thunder, who trailed 52-45 at half-time before outscoring the Mavericks 23-13 in the third quarter to seize command.

German star Dirk Nowitzki scored a game-high 27 points for the Mavericks while Jason Terry added 18 points and a game-high seven assists for Dallas, which fell to 22-17.

Kendrick Perkins pulled down a game-high 14 rebounds for Oklahoma City.

# FIFA apologizes to Brazil to defuse World Cup row



FIFA General Manager, Fulvio Danilas (L), Sao Paulo's Municipal Secretary for the FIFA World Cup 2014, Gilmar Tadeu (C), and the Executive Director for Operations of the Brazilian FIFA World Cup 2014 Local Organizing Committee, Ricardo Trade, attend a press conference after the inspection of the construction site of "Itaquerao" football stadium.

BRASILIA (AFP) - Football's governing body FIFA apologized to Brazil Tuesday in a bid to defuse a blazing row with Brazil over criticism of the country's lagging preparations for the 2014 World Cup.

FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke ignited the controversy Friday when he suggested that the Brazilian organizers needed a "kick up the backside."

That drew a sharp rebuke from Brazil, with Sports Minister Aldo Rebelo saying Valcke would no longer be welcome as a FIFA spokesman.

On Tuesday, FIFA President Sepp Blatter stepped in to calm the row, offering an apology over Valcke's remarks which Brazil -- Latin America's dominant power and now the world's sixth largest economy -- perceived as an affront.

"Both as FIFA president and personally, I would like to apologize to all those -- above all the Brazilian government and President Dilma Rousseff -- who feel that their honor and pride has been injured," he said in a letter sent to Rebelo.

"We have a common goal the organization of an extraordinary World Cup in the land of football, in the land of champions," he added. "Brazil deserves to host the World Cup and the entire world is looking forward to it."

Blatter also said he would like to meet Rousseff and Rebelo "as soon as possible. FIFA have for months expressed concern in varying degrees over the extent to which preparations -- renovation or construction of stadiums as well as infrastructure projects -- are on track for the first World Cup in Brazil since 1950.

Earlier, Valcke himself offered his own apology in a letter to Rebelo, saying he "profoundly regretted that an incorrect interpretation" of his comments had triggered such an angry response from the host country.

He explained that in French, the phrase "se donner un coup de pied aux fesses" (to give someone a kick up the backside) only meant "to pick up the pace." The translation into Portuguese used a stronger expression, he added.

"I don't understand why things are not moving. The stadiums are not on schedule anymore and why are a lot of things late?" Valcke said Friday.

continues on page 15



